

MAY 1983

DHSS supports Society's proposal

Another Beech Tree

WEEKS of uncertainty ended on May 3 when the Department of Health and Social Services announced its decision to give £250,000 to The Spastics Society under a matching "pound for pound" scheme that will help remove children from long-stay subnormality hospitals.

The money represents one-quarter of the £1 million set aside by the DHSS for this scheme. So far the only other recipient is MacIntyre Schools who gets £150,000 for new homes for handicapped people in Westoning, Bedfordshire.

With The Society's contribution of £250,000, there will be £500,000 available to build a community-based residential centre for 14 children at Clayton-

Green, near Chorley, in Lancashire. Plans have already been drawn up for two adjoining units each with seven places.

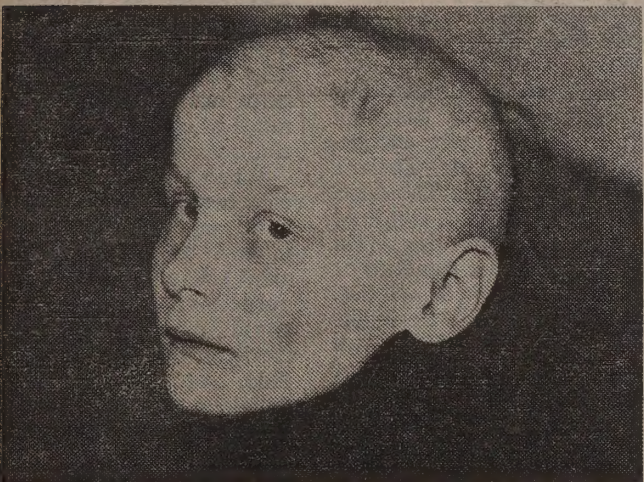
The model for the new centre is Beech Tree House, a residential centre which was opened in 1977 in the grounds of The Society's school, Meldreth Manor, in Hertfordshire.

Pioneer work

Beech Tree House, under its head, Malcolm Jones, is wellknown for its pioneering work with children who have severe behavioural problems. It provides education as well as residential training.

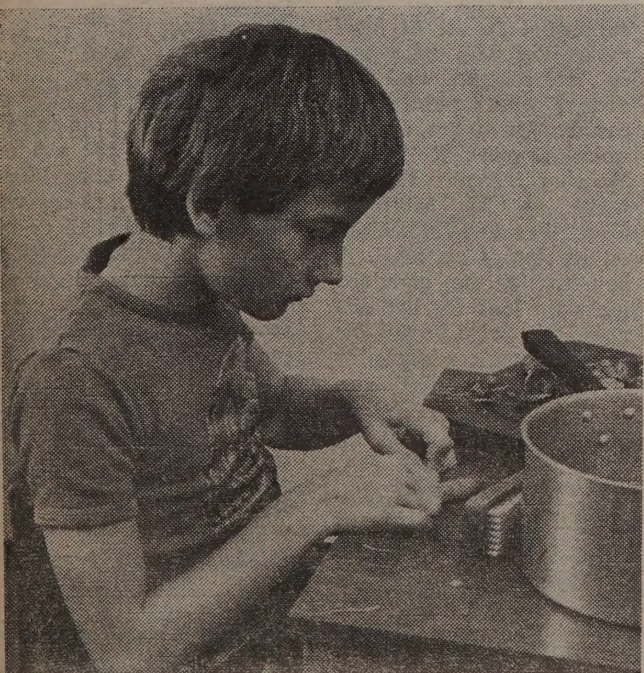
Because there is a high ratio of staff to children, and a democratic approach to sharing work and making decisions, it is possible

Malcolm Jones



Do you remember Terence?

Malcolm Jones



These dramatic pictures underline the work of Beech Tree House.

Terence was the first pupil. He arrived from a long-stay hospital in January 1977, aged 12, heavily drugged to help control his violent and destructive behaviour, which included eating his clothes and pulling out his hair. Part of Terence's problem was that he was profoundly deaf. At Beech Tree a sign system was developed for him and when he refrained from destructive behaviour he was rewarded with tokens to get sweets.

Some nine months later he had reached the point where he could prepare simple meals in the kitchen.

Now he is at Dene College, a further education college run by The Society in Kent, where he is making progress.

to "tailor" programmes for each child and carry them out 24 hours a day.

Children are encouraged to modify their behaviour and when they do their rewards come through specially developed gadgets.

The aim is to reduce a child's problem behaviour within two years to the point where he can return home and attend an appropriate school, or transfer to a children's home or hostel plus school if there are no parents. Twenty-six out of 29 children have passed successfully through Beech Tree House.

The new centre will take advantage of its com-

munity base to involve parents even more in its work and to build close relationships with local education, social and health service staff. All this is vital if children are to transfer successfully.

More needed

More Beech Tree Houses are needed. There are still a great many children and teenagers in long-stay subnormality hospitals who could benefit from the Beech Tree approach.

The Government accepts the need for small, community-based units, but there is no statutory provision and little money.

TEIGNMOUTH BLAMES HANDICAPPED

Bill Hargreaves to mediate

Teignmouth's reputation as a tourist resort is being undermined by large groups of mentally-handicapped people who come to holiday there.

This is the view of Teignmouth's Chamber of Commerce and of members of the Town Council.

As one guesthouse owner puts it, "Our main economy in the town is based on tourism. People come here and they see large numbers of mentally handicapped people, and it distresses them. It sends them to other towns and they don't come back."

The problem developed last year when Paul Bourge, owner of the largest hotel in town, the Royal, started taking up to 100 mentally-handicapped visitors a week. There were allegations of "un-social" behaviour on traders' premises and on the beach. One publican offered £5 to a nurse to take his charges elsewhere. A woman staying at the Royal Hotel fell to her death from a window.

The town felt swamped. It is smaller than Weston-super-Mare, where another hotel run by Bourge's company caters successfully to mentally-handicapped visitors. To some people, Teignmouth was bearing the brunt of an integration policy which is not typical of the country.

At the start of the 1983 season tempers were running high. It was in this atmosphere that MENCAP (the Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults) arranged a press conference on May 4 supported by MIND (the National Association for Mental Health), the Campaign for Mentally Handicapped People, the Home Farm Trust, and The Spastics

Society. Town councillors and members of the Chamber of Commerce were also invited.

The aim of the conference was to plead for better understanding of mentally handicapped people. Unfortunately the plan went awry.

Brian Rix, Secretary-General of MENCAP explained that "Mentally handicapped people are neither ill nor dangerous. They are ordinary human beings with a disability and there is no reason they should be denied the basic rights we all take for granted". He was met with shouts of "rubbish."

After the meeting, Rix and the Mayor of Teignmouth, Don Riddell, agreed independently that attitudes were more entrenched than before.

One suggestion which did find favour with the audience came from Tim Yeo. He urged that those responsible for organising the holidays — administrators from local long-stay hospitals — should ensure that mentally handicapped holidaymakers travel in small numbers and with sympathetic companions.

This is the view of Bill Hargreaves, himself cerebral-palsied, who ran The Spastics Society's holiday department before his retirement. From his experience of organising holidays — none of which has been the subject of complaint — he believes there should be no more than three mentally handicapped people in a disabled group, and each should have a companion.

"It is totally wrong to put mentally handicapped people into unsupervised situations," he says. "The public isn't ready for it."

He welcomes the an-

Continued on page 2



£30,000 for Seeley's House, Beaconsfield, formerly Knotty Green School. Mrs Sheila Whitney, President of the South Bucks Spastics Society, presents a cheque to Earl Howe, President of the South Bucks Joint Association for the Disabled. "Marvellous," said a thankful mother.

Knotty problem solved

When Buckinghamshire County Council planned Knotty Green School it did not allow for falling pupil rolls in Beaconsfield. So this modern one-storey building set in four acres of park-like grounds became redundant last year when the school closed.

Now, renamed Seeley's House, it will open as a centre for young adults who have severe physical and mental handicaps. There will be a day centre for thirty people and a short-stay hostel for twelve. Later it is hoped to develop horticultural training.

The initiative for this scheme came from the South Bucks Joint Association for the Disabled which represents ten local charities including the

South Bucks Spastics Society.

While the Council will give the building and pay running costs, and Social Services will run the project, the Association must still find £250,000 for the cost of conversion and

Continued on page 11

INSIDE

Director's column ...	2
Letters to the Editor .	2
Andrew's "treatment"	3
Where's the benefit? .	5
25 years of the MEIU	5
Margaret Morgan retires	6-7
Books	8
Tim Rice	9
Ads and announcements	10
Regions	11



INCO CARE Insert Pad and Ventilated Pants

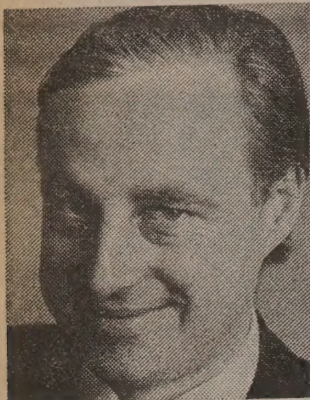
Write or telephone for samples and further details.

Robinsons of Chesterfield

Wheat Bridge, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S40 2AD
Telephone Chesterfield (0246) 31101. Telex 547320

The Director's Column

Margaret Murray



Making it Spending it

The last month has not been a good one for the image of charities generally. Help the Aged came in for criticism both over the percentage of its income devoted to fund-raising and for including an amount in its published income which relates to goods which have been donated in kind rather than cash.

Shortly afterwards the National Trust received publicity about the allegedly low rent which some of its staff were paying for accommodation provided by the Trust.

It is not for me to comment on the affairs of either of these organisations and I am certainly not in a position to judge whether the criticisms were well founded.

Nevertheless, The Spastics Society, as one of the country's leading national charities, has to be concerned about adverse pub-

licity directed at other well-known voluntary organisations. Indeed, there is a risk that when one major charity is criticised in the Press, prospective donors to other charities may hesitate before giving money, even though the other charity may be in no way connected with the criticism.

Confidence

The best way of building up public confidence in any charity is for the organisation to be as open as possible in the way it manages its affairs and in the details it gives about how money is raised and spent. The Spastics Society has tried to exercise some influence in achieving a greater degree of openness and a higher level of disclosure among charities generally.

Annual report

The annual report, which the Society published in October last year represented an important step forward: alongside the usual description of the Society's activities were the audited financial accounts. There are still many organisations which choose to separate their accounts from descriptions of their operations. Such a policy is, in my view, mistaken and can even lead to suspicion on the part of prospective donors.

When the Society receives a gift in kind it does not include the value of such a gift within its published income figures. The income which is shown in the Society's accounts rep-

resents the actual cash received by the Society through its various fund-raising and other income-producing operations.

It would, of course, be nice to be able to run a charity without any fund-raising or administrative expenses. If the organisation concerned is a tiny one employing one or two people, then it is possible for all the administration and fund-raising to be carried out by volunteers free of charge.

However, an organisation which spends well over £20 million a year and supports a staff of more than 2,000 people directly involved in the education, treatment and care of handicapped children and adults cannot expect to avoid administrative and fund-raising expenses. It is to the Society's credit that these two items accounted for only 13½p in every pound raised during 1981/82.

Surplus

While on the subject of money, I am pleased to be able to say that the preliminary indications for the financial year just ended, 1982/83, are good and it appears that after several years of substantial deficits, the Society will have achieved a significant surplus.

Some people take the view that charities should try to conceal any surplus in case its existence deters donors from giving money in the following year. I believe it is right that everyone should know

the true position of the Society in financial terms. There should be no embarrassment about earning a surplus when the accumulated deficits of the last three years alone are well over £1 million.

In our case the surplus has been due first to an unexpectedly successful year in fund-raising and second to the very tight control which has been kept over expenditure in all our main spending divisions. Considerable thanks are due to the people involved in producing a level of income that is higher than expected, and in keeping costs so well under control.

New tasks

The Society's financial success over the past year will allow it to undertake tasks which have been neglected for some time. One of these is the maintenance of our many buildings around the country. It is always easy to cut back on maintenance if savings are needed at the last minute, but in the long term that is usually an expensive policy. The Society is now adopting the more prudent course of preventive maintenance, aimed at reducing the long term costs of keeping our buildings at an acceptable standard.

In addition, we hope to initiate one or two developments during the current year which will reflect the Society's more healthy condition. I hope that this heralds a new era of expansion for The Spastics Society.

Tim Yeo

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hunt the loo

ON Sunday, April 17, nearly all of us who attend Beaumont Products, Abbots Langley, went up to London to see our under manager, Mr Alan Thompson, run in the London Matrathon, and had a very nice day.

There was, however, one blot on the day. When one of our number required a loo, we had great difficulty in finding one, someone had to find the key, as it was locked.

This could never happen in Jersey, where we go for our holidays, as all toilets are marked on the local maps, and those with special facilities for the disabled are marked in red.

Would it not be possible in this country to issue the same sort of maps, of London and other large towns and cities? I am sure that if this were done, it would bring great relief to many people.

George Dellar,
Harpندن,
Herts.

OUR research into this pressing issue did not prove much more encouraging than Mr Dellar's own experience. The GLC at County Hall do not hold a list of conveniences in London, either standard or specially adapted facilities. Most London Boroughs do know where these loos may be found, but do not publish lists as such, although they do seem to be willing to send copies of the list on specific request.

The most positive scheme that we discovered is the RADAR National Key Scheme, to which members of the public can subscribe. A list of local authorities who take part in the scheme, and addresses where public loos can be found are obtainable from RADAR's Housing / Access Department at 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB, on receipt of an SAE. A key to fit the standard locks on loos for the disabled is also available from the same address for a fee of £2.

The list covers many large towns in England, Scotland and Wales.

Westminster City Council did kindly provide us with a list of specially adapted conveniences in their borough.

Easily accessible ones can be found at:

Edgware Road, W2, junction with Harrow Road — down a ramp in subway.

Victoria Embankment Gardens, WC2 — ground level, open 24 hours.

Kensington Road, SW7 — in Kensington Gardens — ground level.

Marble Arch, W2, Cumberland Gate — down a ramp.

Marylebone Road, NW1, opposite Madame Tussauds — ground level.

Tatchbrook Street, SW1, by Vauxhall Bridge Road — ground level.

Westminster Bridge, SW1, by Westminster Pier — ground level.

Specially adapted loos can also be found at St Paul's Church, Covent Garden, near Great Portland Street underground station, Oxford Circus, the Law Courts in The Strand, and Charing Cross Station subway in Trafalgar Square. These are, however, all underground, down a flight of stairs. There should be an attendant present at all these to give assistance when needed.

As a general rule, in London, it is a good idea to try the main British Rail stations or, in desperation, the accidents and emergencies departments of the large London hospitals!

Editor

New world

I VISIT our local Spastics Society shop twice a week, Thursdays (pension day) and Saturdays (shopping day).

Not only does the money help your work, the shop helps us by supplying a range of cheap, good value clothes and Bric-a-Brac.

When I retired from my cleaning job I was at a loose end and short of money. The Spastics Society shop (Eccles) has opened up a whole new world for me and my family. I buy clothes, bedding, records for my daughter, and best of all I collect small ornaments and Bric-a-Brac.

If I live to be 100, I will attribute it to The Spastics Society! Carry on the good work, you're doing fine.

Mrs Bessie Fox,
Swinton,
Manchester.

Survey

WE are making an informal survey of the use of the anti-spasm drug Idorosal (Baclosen). May we have the hospitality of your column to say that we should be grateful to hear from any of your readers who have had experience of this drug, whether favourable or otherwise?

All letters will, of course, be treated as strictly confidential.

Dr B. M. Hamilton,
7 Fulbrooke Road,
Cambridge.

ELECTION

Tim Yeo and John Tizard, parliamentary candidates for South Suffolk and Mid-Bedfordshire respectively, warn their supporters in The Society not to expect election results before noon on Wednesday, June 10. David Hanson, standing in Eddisbury, expects his earlier in the morning. So you can all have an early night on June 9!

TEIGNMOUTH

Continued from page 1

nouncement from the DHSS that £105,000 will be given to recruit volunteers to help mentally-handicapped people. "There is a great need for handicapped people throughout the country to be seen to require companionship and help when they are on holiday away from home. But volunteers must be mature and aware, able to forestall a difficult situation rather than just deal with it."

Bill Hargreaves is hoping to meet members of the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce at Teignmouth to help iron out the problems.

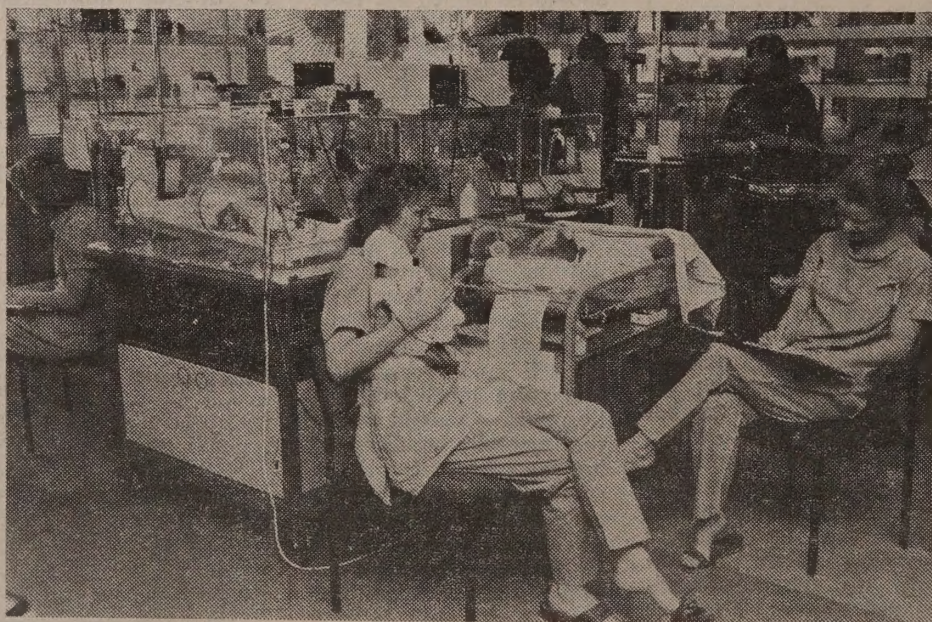
Meanwhile, the Society has contacted local groups and agreed to take up complaints and make representations to the hospitals if necessary. It will support MENCAP's plan to obtain funding for a local liaison officer.

When tempers have cooled, it may be found that the economic risks have been overstated.

Not all the traders at the press conference were worried about their livelihood. "We spoke to half a dozen people who had no complaints," says Helen Donaghy of The Society. "They said they were doing perfectly well."

More help from Heinz

Adrian Gibson



St Mary's Hospital Neonatal Medical Unit, Manchester. State Enrolled Nurse Catherine Jubbs (centre) checks a tiny patient with Staff Midwife Catherine Loughlin (right).

BABIES needing intensive care in the North West will no longer be turned away because of lack of facilities at St Mary's Hospital, Manchester. Now much needed equipment can be purchased with the money raised by H. J. Heinz' highly successful baby food label redemption scheme in aid of The Spastics Society's "Save a Baby" campaign.

A cheque for £18,900 was presented to the neonatal intensive care unit by Mrs J. Williams, deputy chairman of The Spastics North West Regional Committee, on Monday, April 18.

Due to massive support for the appeal by Britain's mothers, which was reflected in the huge number of letters Heinz received welcoming the opportunity to contribute to such a

worthy cause, a total of £40,000 was raised. For every label returned to Heinz they gave the "Save a Baby" campaign 2½p.

Through the "Save a Baby" campaign The Spastics Society has been pressing for more intensive care equipment and improved maternity services and the rest of the funds raised through the appeal will go to other areas of need.

Sorry seems to be the hardest word

Andrew's 'silent treatment'

by Yvette Sanson

ANDREW JACKSON is a 19-year-old young man who who suffers from Cerebral Palsy and spastic quadriplegia. As well as being immobile in all his limbs, he is unable to speak, and conventional communication is not possible.

In some way Andrew is lucky; he lives at home in Grimsby and is cared for by his devoted parents.

But in September 1980, Andrew dislocated one of his hips. This was to be the start of a nightmare two years for Andrew and his family.

Rushed into hospital in Newcastle, Andrew was operated on and his leg put into traction. The following month he was operated on again, and a metal plate of an unusual design and Swiss manufacture was placed in his leg.

After two months in full plaster, Andrew was discharged from hospital on December 18, 1980, in time to spend Christmas at home with his family.

On Christmas Eve, however, he was rushed into his local hospital, Grimsby General, in great pain, an X-ray showing that his hip was out of place once more.

Sedated

Andrew was kept sedated due to the pain he was in, until his discharge in the New Year of 1981.

Rejecting advice to put Andrew into a nursing home, Mr and Mrs Jackson decided to bring Andrew home, and cope

themselves with his physiotherapy programme, and his pain-killing drugs.

The family coped well for most of that year, but in December 1981 it became obvious that Andrew was not only no better but was, in fact, in even greater pain.

Screws

On December 9, in desperation, the Jacksons went to see a paediatrician, and were sent two days later to see Mr Knowles, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon at Grimsby General Hospital.

It was then the Jacksons troubles really began. Mr Knowles immediately shared the family's concern, and on examining Andrew, discovered that the screws on the plate inserted in the Freeman Hospital, Newcastle, had worked loose, and were piercing Andrew's skin.

Operation

To be doubly sure, Mr Knowles sent Andrew to Sheffield for a second opinion. Sheffield consultant, Mr Baker, agreed with the diagnosis and recommended that the plate be removed. This was in mid-January 1982, by which time one of the screws had actually pierced the surface.

Andrew was booked in to Grimsby General for an operation to remove the plate.

He was to be admitted on March 10, 1982, with the operation scheduled for the following day. In the meantime, a summary of Andrew's notes was



K. R. Horsewood

sent to Mr Knowles from the Newcastle Hospital.

Mr and Mrs Jackson had asked that the removal could be done at Grimsby if at all possible so that Andrew could be nearer to home. Mr Knowles studied the notes and agreed that it was quite straightforward and could be done at Grimsby.

Failed

What the summary of notes failed to reveal, however, was that the plate was of an unusual type. Although both the hospital and the Jacksons were unaware of it, the type of plate could not be seen merely on X-ray, and Grimsby General did not have the right equipment to remove it.

With hindsight, the result is predictable. An-

drew was admitted to hospital as planned, and the following day at 3.30 pm his operation began. Unfortunately, Mr Knowles had been taken ill and could not be present, but his registrar performed the operation.

Naturally, once the plate was exposed, it became obvious that the right equipment was not available to remove it, and Dr Mukherjee, the registrar, had no option but to abandon the attempt, for fear of doing

damage to the plate with the wrong equipment.

Under the circumstances, no one could have challenged his decision.

Andrew's wound was closed again, and he was returned to the ward. Mrs Jackson had been at the hospital all that day to be near her son.

"But nobody told me that anything was wrong," she told *Spastics News*. "We had no idea until we eventually managed to see a doctor two days later on the 13th."

When Mrs Jackson asked if ail was well on the 11th, she was told simply that Andrew was "comfortable."

The following day, when Mrs Jackson visited, she remarked that now that the plate was out, Andrew would be able to go on a holiday they had planned.

Worried

The nurse apparently became embarrassed and remarked something to the effect that she would have liked to "tell" her, but it was not her place. Mrs Jackson began to be worried. However, she did make an appointment for Mrs Jackson to see a doctor on the following day at 2.30 pm.

The following day, no doctor turned up at 2.30, and at the end of visiting time the ward office agreed to find a doctor by

telephone. Eventually, Dr Mukherjee arrived and explained what had happened. He had seemed to be very embarrassed.

Mrs Jackson was quite naturally, furious, firstly at Andrew's treatment, and secondly at not having been told at once. "It was just as though the ranks had been closed against us."

Appeal

Mrs Jackson made notes of Andrew's treatment since 1980 on the following day, and appealed to her local Spastics Society for help in making a complaint. Together they sent a complaint to the Area Health Authority on March 16.

It was not until the following day, when Mrs Jackson met Mr Knowles again, that any mention was made of what could then be done for Andrew, who had been through a painful operation for nothing. He explained that nothing further could be done until the present wound had healed, that Andrew could go home once this had happened, and that he would later have to return to Newcastle for the operation.

Finally, on March 26, Andrew was discharged, and Mrs Jackson was told that an outpatient

Continued on page 11

Working well together

"Working together is not a new concept. It is a vital ingredient in proper, adequate local social services," said David Toombs, Director of Social Services for Hereford and Worcester. "We must devise ways to make it truly a reality."

This indeed was the purpose of a joint conference held at Solihull on April 27 between The Spastics Society and the Midlands Region of the Association of Directors of Social Services. It was the first time such a conference had been held.

Fifteen of the sixteen local authorities were represented, many by their directors. Senior officers of The Society were there including the Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, and the Director, Tim Yeo.

Speeches

The morning meeting, chaired by Professor Edward Marsden, Vice-Chancellor of Birmingham University, was devoted to speeches, and then during the afternoon the conference split up into workshops.

Tim Yeo believed that the policy of community care offered a great opportunity for partnership, both of funding and expertise. "Directors of social services and The Society share common objectives, face similar financial constraints and can be of great mutual advantage to each other," he said. "We have experience and expertise over a wide range of handicaps and ought to be used much more by you in advisory and joint planning roles."

Ann Hithersay, Director of Regions, gave examples of joint funding in which The Society is already involved, such as the new Beech Tree House near Chorley, Lancashire, and Seeley's House in Buckinghamshire.

From the other side, David Toombs explained how financial cutbacks and a rising elderly population were putting immense pressures on local authority social services departments, as, indeed, were the rising expectations of the public. Often local authorities could provide a service at the same cost, or lower, than a voluntary organisation.

He believed local

authorities should maintain close contact with voluntary organisations so as to avoid duplication, wasted resources and isolation. "Voluntary organisations must acquaint themselves with local authority procedures and the politics of local government," he added.

Implicit in the discussion was the role of voluntary organisations.

Providers

They cannot be the main providers of services — that is the responsibility of the statutory sector — but they should provide advice and specialist services. Also in the role of pressure group, they are in a unique position to speak up for parents and consumers.

One concrete suggestion which emerged from the conference was for small group housing for physically handicapped adults in Warwick funded jointly by the Regional Health Authority and Warwick County Council and run by The Society. This is being followed up.

Conferences in other regions are being planned for the autumn.

"Batricar gives me total independence"

John Bright of Hammersmith

"I can go where I like, when I like. I just charge the battery over night, and that'll take me up to 18 miles. The makers say it'll climb hills up to 1-in-5 and 5" kerbs; I've been up much higher. And I can go right inside most shops. No problem."

No tax, no insurance, no licence required. HP available.

"Batricar" can make you

mobile," says John Bright.

"Ask for a demonstration and see for yourself."



SN5/83

I would like a Batricar folder/free demonstration

Name _____

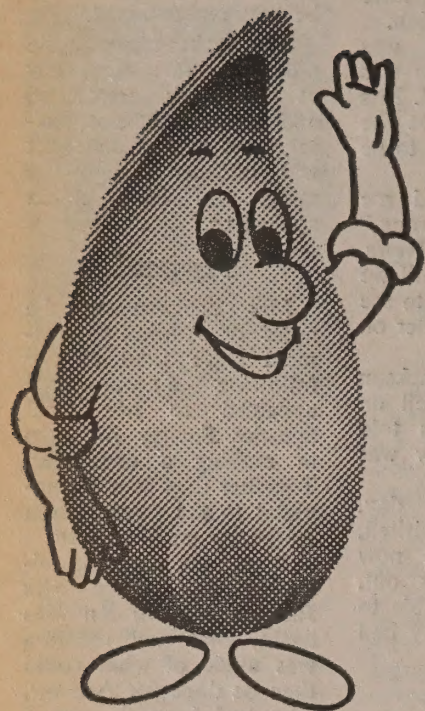
Address _____

Telephone: _____

Batricar Limited, Griffin Mill, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2AZ.
Telephone: 0453 882243. Telex: 43486.

Or, Mayfield Ind. Estate,
Dalkeith, Midlothian.
Telephone: 031-663 0208.

Batricar



"HELP FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED."

British Gas offers a wide range of help to those who need it most, particularly the elderly and disabled.

If you are elderly or disabled, here are some of the ways in which we can make life easier for you. If you know somebody who might benefit from these services, please pass the information to them.

FREE GAS SAFETY CHECKS

A free gas safety check on your gas appliances and installations is available if: *You are 65 or over and you live alone; You are a registered handicapped person of any age and you live alone.*

This free check includes any necessary adjustments as well as materials up to the cost of £2.50 (including VAT). You might have to pay for any additional work that needs to be done.

SERVICING AND LEAKS

Gas fires, water heaters and central heating systems all need servicing from time to time. All customers can be assured that their appliances are operating safely and efficiently if they have them serviced regularly by competent people.

You should also bear in mind that checking and making safe a suspected gas leak is FREE for all customers. Simple gas leak repairs — which can be completed within half an hour — will also usually be free. If you suspect a gas leak at home or in the street, report it at once. The phone is quickest — call the emergency number for your area, under "GAS" in the local telephone directory.

AIDS FOR THE DISABLED

Modern gas appliances are much easier for disabled people to use. Gas built-in ovens and hot-plates can be placed at a convenient height in the kitchen for people in wheelchairs or for people who find it difficult to bend down or reach up when they are cooking. Most new cookers and fires now have automatic spark ignition and need no matches to light them.

If you have a hand disability, you might find the controls on your cooker or gas fire difficult to operate. British Gas has devised a range of special adaptors which should make life easier. There are four types of

tap handles specially designed for cookers, each of which will fit many different models, and tap adaptors for many gas fires.

There is a nominal standard charge of £2 (plus VAT) per appliance for supplying and fitting adaptors to a new or existing appliance.

If you know someone who is blind or has failing sight, please tell them about braille controls for cookers and central heating. The clock controls which switch central heating on and off can be brailled. Special braille or studded oven thermostat dials are available for most gas cookers, together with braille cooking charts.

ASK US TO HELP YOU

British Gas has a team of Home Service Advisers, who will call on disabled people at home and provide free advice on the use of gas. They can provide information about special adaptors and handles and advise on the choice of suitable appliances.

If you would like to contact the Home Service Advisers or to enquire about free gas safety checks, regular servicing for appliances or aids for the disabled, visit your local gas showroom or telephone the gas service centre (the phone number is under "GAS" in the local directory).

PAYING FOR GAS

The showroom can also tell you about easier ways to pay your gas bills, and how to get help if there is real hardship — ask for the Code of Practice, "Electricity and gas bills for your home."

BRITISH GAS



From Pub to Portakabin...

25 years of the MEIU

by Diana Patterson

EACH organisation seems to pride itself on having an "in" language consisting of abbreviations or acronyms which exclude the outsider. I was very glad, therefore, when a member of the Executive Council asked me exactly what MEIU stood for. Since it is our 25th anniversary, other people might like an explanation of who we are and what we do.

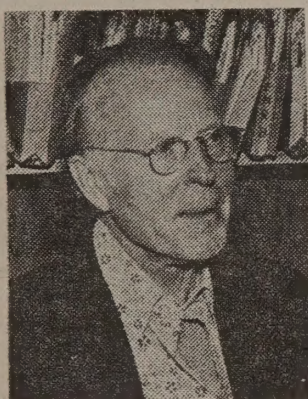
The Medical Education and Information Unit of The Spastics Society stems, like many other things, from the first International Meeting on child neurology and cerebral palsy held in 1958. Its aim has always been to spread knowledge about cerebral palsy and other chronic handicaps to medical and paramedical people in Britain and abroad. This it does by arranging study days, residential conferences and international meetings.

The first meeting, and those which came after, were masterminded by Dr Ronald Mac Keith, a consultant paediatrician at Guy's Hospital, who had been involved with diagnosing and treating cerebral-palsied children for many years. He joined

the Medical Advisory Committee of the then National Spastics Society in 1954.

According to Professor Sir Frank Tizard (a past MEIU chairman MacKeith influenced paediatrics in two important ways: by promoting a more humane treatment of ill and handicapped children in the hospital and the

Maria Bartha



Dr Ronnie Mac Keith

community, and through his work with the Society.

Besides the meetings and the MEIU, he started a journal now called "Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology" which has acquired a world-wide reputation. DMCN is compiled by the editorial board of Spastics

International Medical Publications (SIMP). This year it, too, celebrates its 25th anniversary.

Ronnie Mac Keith with his red carnation and ebullient style has become a legend in the world of paediatric neurology. The carnation has become an emblem which appears on the MEIU's scarves and ties. There is even a Club of the Red Carnation in Sweden.

Those who remember him, like Eve Kelly, his secretary for nearly 30 years, talk of his enormous energy, his charm as a host, his ability to handle meetings. But he was quite capable of saying or doing something outrageous if a meeting lost its pace or the audience looked drowsy.

Opening a talk in Cheltenham, surely the prototype of the small town, he demanded: "How many wet beds were there in Cheltenham last night?" and went on to estimate them at two thousand.

The MEIU's first office was in the redudant "Angel" pub in Newcomen Street. This was also the home of the Newcomen Assessment Centre for handicapped children which Dr Mac Keith worked to establish. From there the MEIU moved temporarily to Mortimer

Street and then to Netherhall Gardens.

When Dr Mac Keith died in 1977, the work continued. The chairman of the advisory committee of the MEIU is now Professor David Taylor, and the executive secretary is Dr Brian Neville, Consultant Paediatric Neurologist at Guy's Hospital. Dr Neville is also the director



Dr Brian Neville

of the Newcomen Child Development Centre. It and the MEIU are housed in a portakabin within the Guy's precinct: the MEIU has come home.

Today the MEIU promotes three types of meeting.

Single study days are normally held at Guy's Hospital. They have covered subjects connected with cerebral palsy.

Following a recent successful study day in Manchester on "Child Mortality," we hope to hold other meetings in the different health regions.

Residential conferences lasting two or three days are usually held at larger universities in the vacation. Between 20 and 40 delegates, experts in their field, explore in depth developments and data on a chosen topic. There are formal papers and discussion time.

Where appropriate, publication may be sought with SIMP.

Future meetings planned include "Screening procedures in child health clinics" and "Child abuse and neglect."

International meetings on child neurology and cerebral palsy are held every other year at St Edmund Hall, Oxford. About 80 people attend the meeting which lasts for four days in September. They are composed of a hard core of old friends from many countries who bring younger people.

The MEIU publicises the work of The Spastics Society at all its meetings with posters and leaflets. SIMP publications are on sale. We welcome ideas for promoting The Society for the next 25 years!

Diana Patterson is secretary of the MEIU.

YOU WON'T FEEL THE BENEFIT

Linda Avery discusses Supplementary Benefit for disabled people

Recent reports in the National Press suggest that the government may be considering the introduction of the Comprehensive Disability Costs and Income Scheme which The Spastics Society submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in February (see *Spastics News* March). If this is true, we would of course welcome the introduction of such a scheme: it would both simplify and extend benefits to disabled people.

Not only does the whole contribution system rest upon a myth, as we revealed last month, but the Supplementary Benefits Scheme is inadequate to meet the needs of people who are disabled or ill.

Supplementary Benefits (SB) is restricted to people who have capital of less than £2,500 (£3,000 from November 1983) and a prescribed level of income. Where a claim is made for a single payment the claimant must first exhaust any saving he or she has over £300 (£500 from

November 1983).

Although SB was not originally designed to meet the needs of disabled people, for many it has become a last resort — a fact which is implicitly recognised in the nine allowances directly related to ill health or disability which have been built into the scheme.

Inadequate cover

Both the level of allowances, and the criteria on which they are allocated, are totally inadequate to meet the increased costs of disablement. Methods of assessment are largely inflexible and the staff who administer SB can be deaf to special needs.

It is widely accepted, for example, that people who are ill or disabled can feel the cold more easily than others and may be house-bound. They need more heat.

Where eligibility for a heating addition is easily identifiable — say the person already receives Attendance or Mobility

Allowance — the addition will usually be awarded. However, where the need is less easily identifiable, the addition is often not awarded. This can happen when the house is damp or draughty. It can happen when a person's mobility is severely restricted but for various reasons he or she is not receiving Mobility Allowance: perhaps she is over 65, in which case if the disability was not evident earlier she will not be receiving Mobility Allowance.

Even when the heating addition is awarded, it is rarely enough to cover heating needs because of the high cost of fuel.

Similarly, standard diet additions are invariably insufficient to cover the extra cost of specially recommended foods for, say, diabetics or those with peptic ulcers. And where a diet is not universally recognised, like the diet recommended by some doctors for people with multiple sclerosis, the additional allowance is often withheld.

People with disabilities may be unable to prepare food or cook it easily, so they are forced to buy prepared food which is more expensive. Again, the extra cost is not allowed for in the criteria used for assessing an award of the diet allowance.

Equally significant, there is no provision for pregnant women in the diet regulations, whether they are disabled or not. Yet there is a recognised correlation between nutritional poverty in pregnancy and handicap births.

A weekly allowance is available to meet the extra cost of wear and tear on clothing. Clothes may need washing frequently on account of incontinence or dribbling; they may be worn out as a result of crawling or friction against wheelchairs or calipers. However, the allowance is not enough to buy new clothes as often as people might wish, and so they have to resort to jumble sales. Similarly, laundry additions are not designed to cover dry cleaning, yet

this may be the most appropriate method of cleaning for disabled people who tend to wear more hard-wearing clothes.

Types limited

Not only does the SB scheme provide inadequate cover for the increased costs of disability; the types of allowances available are extremely limited, too. For example, people with disabilities have to pay for minor household repairs and maintenance and this means higher costs. Those who are house-bound tend to use the telephone more, and that means higher telephone bills. Disability per se means you are barred from financial facilities such as loans and mortgages. Yet none of the SB additional allowances take account of these extra costs.

Elderly people with disabilities are at a particular disadvantage. As I said earlier, they are often ineligible for Mobility Allowance, and the present levels for capital and

savings can disqualify them from claiming SB.

In his Budget speech this year, the Chancellor did concede that the surrender value of life assurance policies will be discounted for capital assessments up to a maximum of £1,500. But even the proposed increase to £500 for permitted savings for single payments may still have the effect of excluding many elderly people, disabled or otherwise, who have saved hard to cover the cost of their own funerals.

Since both the levels and types of additional allowance available are so limited, the independence of recipients is automatically restricted. This is true not only of the SB scheme but of other disability benefits currently available.

We believe our range of proposals would overcome the complexity of the present benefits system. They would provide disabled people with an adequate income which would allow them to live independent and dignified lives.

Margaret Morgan retires

The Spastics Society is losing one of its best-known figures. Margaret Morgan joined as an Employment Officer in 1957.

Twenty-six years later she leaves as Controller of the large and prestigious Social Services Division.

The Society marked the end of an era with retirement parties at Park Crescent and Fitzroy Square.



Her first "agony aunt" letter? Tim Yeo presents Margaret Morgan with a cheque from the Society to mark her many years of service.

PARK CRESCENT



Mrs Joyce Smith, chairman of The Society, thanks Margaret Morgan for the care and dedication she brought to her work. To the left of Mrs Smith is the corner cabinet, a gift from the local groups.

Share your problems

Fortunately for The Society, this is not farewell, for the "new" format Spastics News will include a problem column, which Miss Margaret Morgan has agreed to write for us. Her experience and expertise will not be going to waste in any way. Letters are welcome now for Miss Morgan's column, c/o Spastics News at 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

Her work

"THANK you, my friend," says one lady whom Miss Morgan first knew as a schoolgirl, "for all you have done for me and people like myself. When things were desperate and I was not very sociable, it was like having a light at the end of a long tunnel."

Ever since Margaret Morgan announced her retirement in January, letters have been pouring into Fitzroy Square.

This immediate and affectionate response from so many old friends made during more than twenty-five years with The Spastics Society has totally surprised and delighted her.

Miss Morgan joined The Spastics Society in September 1957, just five years after it had been founded by a nucleus of parents desperate about the future of their own spastic children, and a few others similarly determined to improve the lives of all sufferers from the then little known condition called cerebral palsy.

Employment Officer

She was the Society's first Employment Officer. Her colleagues were one social worker and Bill Hargreaves, the Industrial Liaison Officer — himself cerebral-palsied — who retired last January after thirty years with The Society.

These three, together with one or two residential centres which had recently been opened, formed the entire complement of what was to develop into the

Social Services Division, of which Miss Morgan has been the Controller.

This now has well over a thousand members of staff providing a wide range of services and including forty-four residential and industrial units.

"My role," she explained, "was to help spastic people find jobs." Simpler said than done.

The younger ones then emerging from the recently

She and Bill Hargreaves originally worked from an office over an antique shop in Euston Road.

They soon outgrew this and moved first to Oxford Street and later to The Society's new headquarters in Park Crescent which were purchased in 1960.

The move to Fitzroy Square in 1968 and the setting up of the Family Services Assessment Centre with its specialised staff,

what later became as the vocational assessment course which since been attended by tens of thousands of people." Co-incidentally the 262nd vocational assessment course was the progress at Fitzroy Square Centre.

Parallel with her Careers and Employment Department was the rapidly fast-growing Social Services Department and in the 1960s, the two were amalgamated and she became Controller of the Social Services.

In March 1982 a further milestone was reached when the present Social Services Division was formed to embrace all the Society's residential and industrial units under control.

Talking to Miss Morgan about her years with the Spastics Society not only makes fascinating listening but also reveals the wisdom of the Society's Executive Council in choosing people with proven skills in specialised fields.

Miss Morgan's contribution to the work of the Society is a shining example. Her professionalism, experience and



Down at grass roots. Visiting Thorngrove in the mid-sixties with Miss Morgan was Mr Cleaver, retired warden of Princess Marina Centre. Doing the spadework were Timothy Bower and Douglass Sharpe, of Thorngrove.

established Sherrards Industrial Training Centre had instantly highlighted the urgency of finding them suitable places of employment.

"Having paid some visits to schools and looking at the overall situation, we quite quickly realised that a whole series of on-going assessment and training services were required to help prepare young spastic people for adult life—some of whom were never going to be able to manage full-time employment."

homely atmosphere and wide resources of knowledge and skills, represented the crowning achievement of a succession of important stages in developing and establishing the whole structure of the Social Services Division. It is the crucible for a range of services, advice, information and help which are disseminated all over the world.

Recalling those early days, Miss Morgan said: "It was in July 1958 that we ran the prototype of



One of Fitzroy Square. Miss Margaret Morgan. Six-month-old mum and dad, attended by capped parents and

Miss Morgan chats with Philip Dyer, Head of Careers and Advisory Services, Michael Stopford, Head of Centres, and her successor, John Belcher.



PRESENTS GALORE!

- ★ From local groups all over the country, a magnificent antique corner cabinet.
- ★ From the Executive Council, a dinner service in white china edged with gold.
- ★ From the staff at Park Crescent, a Magimix food processor.
- ★ From colleagues at Fitzroy Square, a portable electric typewriter, stationery, office equipment, flowers, and two suitcases.
- ★ From the Wales Region, a cut glass claret decanter, wine glasses and a tray.
- ★ From the Living Options Group, an oval silver photograph frame.
- ★ From The Society, a long service award in the form of a cheque.

That was the team. L to R: Bill Hargreaves, then admin assistant

es — end of an era

Among all the compliments showered upon her, perhaps Miss Yeo's can be singled out. She spoke of the 'invisibility' of

her work, the way she would sort out a problem quickly and quietly. 'But the cumulative effect of her work is known.'

I have often encountered people who thought The Spastics Society was Fitzroy Square and in particular Miss Morgan.'

standing have enabled her both to perceive the needs and to build up an enduring structure for the long-term education, training and rehabilitation of spastic people of all ages.

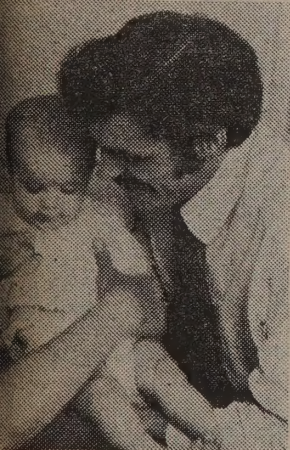
Her influence has not stopped there. She appreciated The Society's needs to inform government and local authorities, as well as the man in the street, about cerebral palsy.

So, much of her energies and spare time have been directed to talking about the needs of spastic people. She says there is still a great deal more to be done in changing public attitudes.

Miss Morgan was born in South Wales and did a degree course at the Royal Holloway College during the war years.

She then took a post-graduate social studies course specialising in personnel management. For the next 12 years she worked in industry, holding a senior post in the personnel field before going out to New Zealand working in a hospital there for 12 months.

When she returned to this country, she felt she wanted to become involved



Miss Morgan meets young visitors at the weekend course for handicapped children.



Children at the Calcutta Centre for Special Education present gifts to Miss Morgan during her 1981 India visit.

in something more worthwhile than commerce.

"It can be very difficult to make natural relationships with people suffering from some great disadvantage, especially if communication is difficult, as it so often is with cerebral palsy.

"I have tried to see disabled people as individuals and to relate to them in the way appropriate to each of them personally—with expectations of their response."

People with cerebral palsy, she believes, do not want concessions made just because they are "spastic". "You have to be objective. I have never failed to be surprised by how much severely handicapped people have been able to achieve in life. I some-

times think they take special delight in proving me wrong!"

"I have been particularly interested in helping disabled people make more effective personal relationships and vice versa—in making able-bodied people see men and women with disabilities as real people."

Miss Morgan has been in great demand as a speaker and has travelled widely attending many seminars and conferences overseas. She has also written a number of papers on different aspects of The Society's work which have had considerable impact.

The Indian Spastics Society which was started from small beginnings just over ten years ago is particularly close to her heart.

In the 1960s she had met two Indian mothers whilst they were in London. One had a small spastic girl, the other a spastic boy, so she encouraged them to start up "Local Groups" in Bombay and Calcutta.

Since then The Spastics Society of India has leapt ahead and in 1979 and 1981 Miss Morgan and members of Action India, a small group under the chairmanship of Mr Alex Moira, visited India to present a series of lectures in major cities.

In 1965 she was awarded the MBE for her services to spastic people, particularly in the field of employment.

Plans

The future seems to be no less busy. Later this year, she plans a trip to Australia. She also intends to write further papers including booklets and leaflets on specialised aspects of disability.

Among the letters she has received was one from a longstanding friend with cerebral palsy in Canada who has asked her whether she would now have the time to write some articles for their journal.

When she returns home next year she hopes to become involved in the counselling field.

She lives in Hampstead but thinks it is on the cards that she will eventually move westwards.

Testimony to Miss Morgan's success in forging those special relationships which have been the cornerstone of her invaluable work, and which have perhaps helped to create the informal atmosphere at Fitzroy Square Centre, lies with some of those letters which she is now treasuring.

Ann Potter

Party photos Nigel Tuckett



Firm friends — Miss Morgan, Mrs Annie Harrington who was for many years housekeeper at The Society's hostel at Thornton Heath, and Mrs Betty Sharp who travelled up from Devon for the occasion.



Remember when? Former Regional Social Workers Doreen Hall and Sheila Fox enjoy a tete-a-tete.



Margaret Morgan with two old friends, Jessie and Hans Dongen.



Re-united are The Society's early social work and careers guidance team. From left: Careers Officer Aline Wynn; Edna Baldwin, originally secretary to Miss Morgan; social worker Ursula Ollman; social worker Margaret Richards; and Margaret Morgan.

FITZROY SQUARE



Miss Audrey Davey, ex-Regional Social Worker for South Wales, addresses a gathering of Miss Morgan's friends and former colleagues at a special birthday party.

BOOKS

Science for Handicapped Children.

By Alan V. Jones.
(Souvenir Press, hardback £7.95, paperback £5.95).

This book has been written for use in the home as well as at school.

It is intended to fill a gap in the education of many handicapped children.

The author believes that science is often left out of a special school's curriculum because it is thought that it would be too difficult to do experiments. He sets out to prove that much can be done using ordinary household equipment and that children can be interested even if their range of movement is so limited that they can only watch. He concentrates on the non-biological sciences as he feels that children have more often been introduced to nature study.

Most of the book is taken up with experiments which young people can do or watch. Each experiment has a star rating according to difficulty. This is to enable a teacher or parent

to choose activities suitable for the child's physical and mental capabilities. The book is aimed at children between the ages of 11 and 16 with a reading age of eight or above.

The experiments are grouped into subject areas. They could be used in the building of a school's curriculum or to increase the scope of a child's interest at home. They could indeed create interesting activities to fill in some of those long school holidays when someone can be heard asking "What can I do now?"

Valerie Lang

The Sunday Times "Self-help" Directory.

Edited by Oliver Gillie, Angela Price and Sharon Robinson.
(Granada £3.95).

This directory first appeared in 1975, and has now been brought up to date with a Foreword by Jack Ashley, MP.

It contains a comprehensive list of organisations which cover almost every area of need.

Science — Self-help — Cooperation — Careers

It would be wrong to suggest that this volume is aimed specifically at disabled people. Within its covers, the reader will find the British Gas Corporation, the Independent Schools Information Service and The Inter-Nations Friendship Circle.

Although there are clear and brief descriptions of all its listed organisations, the "Self-help Directory" is perhaps too ambitious for its own good, and lacks the conceptual tightness of a work directed at a more closely defined readership.

I believe that the "Directory for the Disabled" by Darnborough and Kinrade is more useful for those who need an information handbook on disability.

Ron Gerver

Historic Houses, Castles and Gardens in Great Britain and Ireland — 1983 Edition

IN continuous production for over 30 years, the 1983 edition completely up-dates the 1,200 entries, listing by county, open times, entrance charges, catering facilities and a description of each property's special features.

Now that spring is almost here, **Historic Houses, Castles and Gardens** makes an ideal companion with which to explore Britain's cultural heritage.

At £1.50 from book-sellers (or £2.60 post paid from the publishers), it's unbeatable value. Pub-

lished by ABC Publications, World Timetable Centre, Church Street, Dunstable LU5 4HB.

Parents, Professional and Mentally Handicapped People (Approaches to Partnership).

Edited by Peter Mittler and Helen McConachie.
(Croom Helm £12.95).

This collection of papers which is based on a Seminar held at the University of Manchester in 1981 examines ways of improving relationships between the parents of mentally handicapped children and professional people in the field.

The introductory paper by Mittler and McConachie is particularly good. As well as presenting detailed criteria for the establishment of a close parent - professional relationship, it stresses the importance of the family, and the relevance of education — a good description of the 1981 Education is included. The role of residential schools is also surveyed.

The paper by Mittler and McConachie is clearly written, and, like most of the other papers in the book, mercifully free of jargon.

The volume's other essays include detailed discussions on the chronological progression of mentally handicapped people — their infant and childhood years, their school years and the problems they face in adolescence and adulthood. In addition there is

a psychologist's view given by Jill Gardner which draws attention to the difficulties that can arise when families are loosely involved in the processes of education and training.

Ron Gerver

Careers Working with the Disabled

By Judith Taylor.
(Kogan Page careers series, hardback £6.95, paperback £2.50).

FOR those considering careers in the field of care for the disabled, this book outlines many of the options available in the fields of social work, teaching, nursing and other health service careers, remedial gymnastics, careers advice, disablement resettlement work, as well as occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

The book covers the aspects of training for a chosen career, the qualifications needed, what each job entails, the relationship between job holder and employer, career prospects and salaries.

Part two of the book lists training courses and qualifications, and gives the addresses of colleges, professional institutions and other organisations.

As a starting point for choosing a career, this book would be very useful as it covers a broad area and provides a useful basis for further investigation of a chosen field.

Yvette Sanson

Supplementary benefits

The research for this article has also been used in a report on the difficulties of applying for and obtaining SB additional allowances which Linda Avery completed for the Disability Allowance. The report includes a detailed guide showing how to claim the allowances and the best way of ensuring that you receive everything to which you are entitled.

It Doesn't Add Up to Much is available from The Disability Alliance, 21 Star Street, London W2 1QB (telephone 01-402 7026).

Andrew Jackson

"The Silent Treatment" Continued from page 3

appointment had been made for Andrew on April 23. There she was told the same thing: Andrew would have to go to Newcastle or wait for Grimsby to buy the equipment. In the meantime, Mrs Jackson and a Spastics Society representative saw the Deputy District Administrator for Grimsby Health Authority, Mr Harborne. "He expressed horror at what had happened," says Mrs Jackson, "but he didn't give us any explanations."

Meanwhile, Andrew was still living with the problem.

On May 27, 1982, Mrs Jackson wrote in desperation to The Health Service Commissioner for England, Sir Cyril Clothier, to complain about Andrew's treatment. He agreed to investigate her claims if Mr and Mrs Jackson would agree not to take any legal action over the matter.

This they agreed.

The Jacksons complained on four counts.

1 — There was undue delay in telling them that the removal of the plate had failed. This complaint was upheld.

2 — Advice was not sought from Newcastle before attempting the operation. This was not upheld, as it was ruled that the consultant was entitled to rely on the summary of notes sent from Newcastle.

It has been suggested to Newcastle that the information should have been included in this summary, and steps are being taken to ensure that this is done in all future cases.

3 — There was again undue delay in discussing any further treatment for Andrew. This complaint was not found to be made out, principally because it

was Mrs Jackson's word against Mr Knowles'. "But they ignored one important witness to this," explained Mrs Jackson. The report states that on March 17, Mr and Mrs Jackson saw Mr Knowles to discuss further treatment for Andrew.

"It wasn't my husband with me that day, but my brother, Mr Rycroft," she said.

"I gave the investigating officers his name, address and telephone number. He was never even approached."

4 — Mrs Jackson's complaints had not been answered adequately by the Health Authority. This was also upheld. The Health Authority had asked the Commissioners to convey their apologies to Mrs Jackson.

No apology

However, Mrs Jackson has never received a letter of apology from the hospital, Grimsby Health Authority, or any of the medical staff involved. What is worse, perhaps, is that no one has tried to apologise to the one person who has suffered most, Andrew Jackson himself. As his mother says, since he can't speak, it is impossible to tell how much mental and physical anguish Andrew went through.

The plate was finally removed in Newcastle in July 1982.

Mrs Jackson was upheld on two of her complaints, but where does that get her, or others like Andrew?

Apart from copies of the report being sent to the doctors involved, she feels that nothing else will happen. Grimsby General has now been closed. "I'm sure they'll just forget all about it," says Mrs Jackson. "I almost wish we'd sued."



Stepping up in style

Most wheelchairs promise to take you up a kerb but bring you back down to earth again with a bump. The Ortopedia smooths out those bumps and brings back comfort you'd almost forgotten existed. Its spring-coiled suspension and Harvest Gold upholstery will cushion you up and down kerbs, forwards and backwards, wherever you want to go. Special purpose re-chargeable batteries, four braking systems and a host of 'special' features we call 'standard' add up to the finest wheelchair you can buy.

As with all the best things the Ortopedia costs a little more. It's a real investment and you will want to be sure about your choice. So don't take our word for it, try the Ortopedia yourself in the comfort of your own home. Sit in it, drive it, and feel the total comfort and control. We guarantee you'll like its style.

Everest & Jennings
Wheelchairs and Aids for the Disabled

To: Everest & Jennings Ltd Princewood Rd Corby Northants NN17 2DX Telephone Corby 67661

I'd like to try the Ortopedia for myself. Please arrange for my personal home demonstration of:

☐ The Ortopedia outdoor model ☐ The Ortopedia compact home & garden model

Name

Address

Tel. No.

SN2

Putting it simply

THE very words "Housewives' Non Contributory Invalidity Pension" or "Attendance Allowance" can be enough to throw would-be claimants into a deep sense of confusion, long before they see the understandably dreaded claim forms which go with them. Yet, for many, the income which these two benefits provide for disabled people and their partners or carers can make all the difference to the quality of home life.

The Disability Alliance Educational and Research Association is one organisation which understands such fears. Much of its work is concerned with explaining in simple terms how to claim benefits, the procedures involved, and what to do if your claim should be rejected.

Two of their latest publications are designed to explain how to claim for Housewives' Non Contributory Invalidity Pension, and Attendance Allowance.

The first, "Check Your Rights No 2," explains how to build up your case, and produce enough evidence to prove your entitlement to Housewives' Non Contributory Invalidity Pension. This benefit is designed to help disabled married women, or common-law wives, who are not able to do a substantial part of routine housework unaided. The leaflet, which is in the form of an exhaustive questionnaire, is designed to make sure

that you do not forget anything which may be of importance to your case. It is designed primarily to help those who have been refused the benefit, and are fighting an appeal, but would be equally useful to those who feel that they haven't a clue where to start. The leaflet is available from The Disability Alliance, 21 Star Street, London W2 1QB, 50p for claimants, 80p for advisors.

The second aid is in the form of two fact sheets to help with claiming Attendance Allowance. This benefit is paid to disabled people in order to allow them to obtain the care which they need more easily. A doctor makes the medical assessment of need. The Attendance Allowance Checklist will help you to make sure that you inform the doctor of all relevant points which will help your claim to be successful.

Should your claim be rejected, you have the right to ask for a review. The second fact sheet tells you how to go about getting that review, what the procedures are, and how to build up extra evidence which might reverse the decision, or increase the allowance if you were only granted a reduced rate.

Both fact sheets are available from The Disability Alliance at the same address. 40p each post free to advisors; free to claimants who send a stamped, self-addressed envelope of A5 size.

"Becoming Chairman of SOS is a major commitment"



FREEDOM

& Independence in Style

If you're aged or infirmed regain your independence with the simple & safe to drive lion. Battery power gives an 18 mile range & ability to climb kerbs & hills no tax or licence required.



Name

Address

Tel.

write for a list of stockists & brochure without obligation

Lion Rack Holdings Ltd.
 Fleet House, Fleet Lane,
 Poole, Dorset, BH15 3BU
 Tel: (0202) 6188333

Ads and Announcements

For Sale

GENIE I Microcomputer (tape recorder incorporated). Green Screen 12in monitor EG 101. Manuals, programs, original box, perspex finger guide attached—but removable, £225 ono. Can be contacted after 5 pm on Stevenage 721216. Could be delivered within 10-mile radius.

WESSEX Mark V Chair Lift covering 12 stairs and is 13ft long. Has been used twice a day for 10 months. In very good condition. Price £750 ono.

Contact Mrs E. Denzier, 01-889 2399.

VESSA Vitesse Powerchair, 18 months old but little used. With 6ft folding aluminium ramps.

Offers to Mrs McIntosh, Pippins, Back Lane, Cross-in-Hand, Heathfield, Sussex.

MINI Clubman automatic, V registration. Poynting conversion to take passenger in wheelchair. 24,000 miles, good condition, rustproofed and undersealed, £3,900 ono. Contact Smith, 26 St Margaret's Court, Durham DH1 4QY. Tel: (0385) 62127.

MacCLAREN Buggy Major, suitable for teenager (holds up to nine stone in weight), folds to store easily in the boot of a car. Bought for period of temporary invalidity, now unnecessary. Current cost approx £80, will accept £32, plus buyer to cover cost of carriage, from Surrey. Contact: Gray, Tel: 01-948 2085.

ONE ortho-kinetic cushion-lift chair. Bought new, never used. Colour oatmeal, £400 or near offer. — Ring 01-503 6347.

HOME Patient Helper. Enables people to change to a more comfortable position. The support tubing is chrome-plated with two handles for adjustment.

The base is fitted with two castors and two non-slip rubber tips. Price £25.

Please contact: L. Proctor, Aids and Equipment, Fitzroy Square, Tel 01-387 9571 or Miss Binyon on 01-883 6066.

MODERN 4 bedroom house, large fitted kitchen, lounge, dining room, plus self-contained ground floor flat suitable for the wheelchair bound. Price £49,950. — Tel REID, Nuneaton 387500.

Giveaway

15th COTHORNE Scout Group have recently purchased a secondhand minibus with a Ratchiff tail lift attached and in perfect working order. As they do not need this they would like to donate it to a local group which may need it.

If interested please contact Mr W. E. Acramon, Scout Leader, 17 Roffey Close, Copthorne, Crawley, Sussex.

Penfriends

DISABLED man, 41, slightly affected in all limbs, seeks female pen-friend, 25 to 40 years, living in London or the South of England only. Please write c/o Box No 102, Spastics News.

LONELY disabled gentleman over 40 seeks mildly disabled lady companion of similar age and interests. Interests are aircraft, trains and good English cooking. Contact Mr J. Moses, Mena House, 78 Victoria Road, Penarth.

Courses

SOUTH West London College are running a weekend course aimed to introduce counselling skills to disabled and able-bodied students, in October 1983.

Running from Friday 28 to Sunday, October 30, the course is designed for beginners in the field, and for those with some experience who wish to explore further.

Students will participate in a workshop method of learning, theory and personal experience being shared in a variety of groupings.

The course will be residential, at Margaret McMillan House in Wrotham, Kent. Students requiring minimal help, helpers will be on hand, but those requiring more help will be asked to bring a helper with them, who will be charged residential fees only.

Application forms from The Senior Tutor, Counselling Courses, South West London College, Abbotswood Road, London SW16 1AN.

Sports

SEVENTH Tamar Canoe Camp, lead by Mrs Flok deRijke, will be held on 24-29 of July, 1983 near Plymouth. No experience is necessary, but the full programme which will cover both sea

and river canoeing will suit beginners to experienced canoeists.

The camp, which is based on a pleasant grassy site overlooking Plymouth Sound, is run by a large number of experienced volunteer instructors who are giving their time free of charge.

The consequent cost of the camp is very low, at £28 for the six days. Helpers may also join the course for the same fee.

For further details contact Mrs Flok de Rijke, Senior Physiotherapist, Trengweth School, Hartley Road, Plymouth, Devon. Tel: (0752) 771975 or 773735.

Holidays

MAJORCA Holiday Apartment run by Coombe Farm residential centre has vacancies for holiday fortnights July 7-21, July 21 to August 4 and August 18 to September 1, 1983.

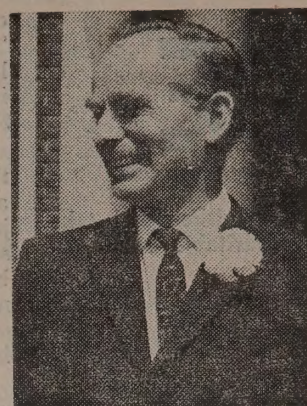
The holiday package is for 4 persons, of whom at least one must be handicapped.

The cost is £170 per head, including return transport Coombe Farm to Gatwick, return air fare Gatwick to Palma and return taxi fare airport to hotel.

Apartment has 2 bedrooms, lounge, kitchen and bathroom. Apartment is built into a hotel, whose dining facilities may be used instead of self-catering.

Inquiries should be addressed to: Mr B. G. Peet, Warden, Coombe Farm, Oaks Road, Croydon CR9 5AR.

OBITUARIES



David Barke

FRIENDS and supporters of White Lodge Centre, will be sad to learn of the death of David Barke, chairman of the centre's management committee.

"Without David, and people like him, there just wouldn't have been a White Lodge," said Carol Myers, the principal.

In 1952, David and Mary Barke had a son, called Simon. He was severely handicapped with cerebral palsy. The Barke's lived in Australia at this time, but on their return to Britain in 1954, David became involved with his local North Hants Group. Simon died, sadly, in 1957, but David was by then far too deeply committed to helping disabled people, and children like Simon, to think of giving up.

He was on the earliest committees which started the work of White Lodge, initially in the village hall at Worpleson. He was also on the committee which negotiated the purchase of the land on which White Lodge now stands. In the early 1960s, David could be found during his leisure hours with his family, clearing the land and digging the foundation ditches. The foundation stone was laid in 1961, and services began the following year.

In 1970, the centre's extension was opened by HRH The Duchess of Kent. Again, literally, David had done most of the early spadework.

In 1980 plans began for a further extension of services, this time for adults,

a project which David had always hoped to see. Sadly, he died on April 27, 1983, just over two weeks before the new adults' facilities were to be opened. He died aged 64 after a brief, unexpected illness.

Despite his commitment to White Lodge, he found time for many other outside interests. An ex-Army officer, David was by profession a lecturer at Sandhurst Military Academy. He was a family man; besides Simon, he and Mary had a son, Christopher, and two daughters, Rosemary and Jenny. In 1965, he became interested in the Forest School Camps scheme, and organised many camping holidays for underprivileged children. He was keen on conservation, he kept bees, and was a member of the Farnborough Morris Men.

A memorial fund for David has been set up at the request of Mary Barke, and any donations will be welcomed at White Lodge Centre, Holloway Hill, Chertsey, Surrey.

William Curphey

THE Isle of Man Spastics Welfare Fund are sad to announce the death of Mr William Curphey, who died in March, aged 76.

"Billy" as he was known to all his friends, was not only a dedicated fundraiser and supporter of his local Manx Welfare Fund, but was also an official Spastics Pool collector from the inception of the scheme in 1957.

At Billy's own request, many donations have been sent in his memory to the Welfare Fund, and in recognition of all his work, the money received will be used to buy "The William Curphey Cup" which will be awarded annually to the pupil at The Glencrutchery Road Special School, who has made the most progress in communication skill in that year.

The cup is to be presented to the school by Billy's widow, Dolly, this month. The first award of the cup will be made in July this year at the school's sports day celebrations.

The Visiting Aids Centre

THE Visiting Aids Centre is a mobile exhibition which carries vital information to disabled and elderly people all over the country.

It is run by The Spastics Society and financed by the DHSS.

An electric lift at the back of the centre allows access to wheelchairs and inside there is ample turning space.

Nearly 200 items can be tried out — children's aids, items for eating and food preparation, recreational aids including magnetic games and specially designed gardening tools.

A photographic index details over 500 aids to make bathing, toileting, mobility, communication, leisure and house management easier for the disabled.

Information is available on holidays for the disabled and on charities and support organisations.

A reference section contains books, manufacturers' leaflets and catalogues, and there is an occupational therapist on hand to give expert information, help and advice to visitors.

Here is the list of places and opening dates for 1983.

For further information contact the VAC Officer, Visiting Aids Centre, The Spastics Society, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ (tel: 01-387 9571).

GREAT YARMOUTH	May 23-28; May 31-June 3
GRANTHAM	June 6-11; June 14-17
DONCASTER	June 27-July 2; July 5-8
HUDDERSFIELD	July 11-16; July 19-22
BLACKBURN	July 25-30; August 2-5
LANCASTER	August 15-20; Aug 23-26
BARROW-IN-FURNESS	Aug 30-Sept 3; Sept 6-9
WORKINGTON	Sept 12-17; Sept 20-23
CARLISLE	Sept 26-Oct 1; Oct 4-7
PENRITH	October 17-22
NOTTINGHAM	Oct 24-29; Nov 1-4
PETERBOROUGH	Nov 7-12; Nov 15-18
LONDON: HARROW	Nov 28-Dec 3
LONDON: BRENT	December 5-10

SOCIETY SCHOOL TO CLOSE

THE Spastics Society has decided, with much regret, that it must close one of its eight schools, Wilfrid Pickles School, which is based at Tixover Grange, near Stamford, Lincs.

The Society recognises the invaluable and outstanding contribution made by the school during the 27 years it has been running, to the education of

physically handicapped children.

However, there has been a steady fall in the pupil roll at the school, which is caused by the decline in the birth rate overall; the lower incidence of handicap at birth and to the growing number of children being integrated into "ordinary" schools.

Every effort will be made by the Society to place the children currently attending the school in other schools run by the Society.

Wilfrid Pickles will close in August 1984 and in the interim discussions will be held with the pupils and their families about future placements.

The Society will also endeavour to redeploy staff wherever possible. As yet no plans as to the future of the premises have been formed.

WHEELCHAIRS Ashley Mobility

Sole Distributors for Vessa Ltd's range of Power and Hand-Propelled Wheelchairs in the Midlands, Powys, Avon and Somerset. Also Everest & Jennings Distributors and BEC & Batracar Agents. All these makes are available on 'Mobility' HP, to recipients of the Mobility Allowance. Write for details and colour brochures. FREEPOST, Birmingham B25 8BR. Tel 021 772 5364 or Ashley Mobility (Worcester) FREEPOST, Worcester WR4 9BR. Tel 28575 or Ashley Mobility, FREEPOST, Weston super Mare, Avon BS23 3BR. Tel 26011.

The ALPHA Senator WHEEL-CHAIR HOME LIFT

- SELF-SUPPORTING LIFT SHAFT (Only lift of its kind available in UK).
- NO OUTSIDE WALL NEEDED.
- 2-FLOOR UNIT, FROM ONLY £4,600 DELIVERED & INSTALLED COMPLETE.
- LIFT ENTRANCE ON ANY ONE OF 3 SIDES OR ALL 3 IF REQUIRED.
- EVERY LIFT DESIGNED INDIVIDUALLY TO SUIT SITUATION.
- 24 HOUR SERVICE BY NATIONWIDE TEAM OF SERVICE ENGINEERS.
- REGULAR SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT ARE OPERATED.
- FREE SITE SURVEY & QUOTATION WITHOUT OBLIGATION.

Phone or write for immediate personal attention:-



ALPHA LIFTS LIMITED

FREEPOST STOURBRIDGE WEST MIDLANDS DY8 1BR Telephone: KINGSWINFORD (0384) 294715

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

THE Spastics Society's Consumer Group, headed by Ron Gerver, assisted by Hilary Leslie, has arranged the following regional meetings. (Others will be announced later.)

WEST, June 10:
The National Star Centre, Ullenwood Manor, Cheltenham, Glos (John Roberts, 0272-276689).

WALES, June 25:
Sully Works, Hayes Road, Sully, S Glamorgan (Moi Pritchard, 0222-30749).

New name for Toy Libraries

ON April 26, the Toy Libraries Association adopted the campaign name "Play Matters" as an umbrella title for all the Association's work as an information and advisory service on toys, play and toy libraries.

"Play Matters" as a title reflects the expanding work of over 1,000 toy libraries in the community, and for people with special needs.

Play is crucial in a child's development. Toy libraries serve a vital role in bringing these opportunities to all children.

Statutory and voluntary services are combining in their efforts to bring a higher quality of play to ALL children through this lending service of toys. Children learn through play — to play is to communicate.

PLAY really does MATTER!

Regions...Regions...Regions

Ann Priest



A happy group outside Seeley's House. Left to right, Mrs Frances Riches; Roy Hurd, Chairman, South Bucks Association for the Disabled; Mrs Sheila Whitney; Mrs Audrey Snowden and, in the wheelchair, her daughter Clare; Ann Hithersay; Mrs Joyce Smith; Ray Donelan, Chairman of the South Bucks Spastics Society; Mrs Jessica Smith, Secretary of the South Bucks Spastics Society; Mr Barlow, Janet Barlow and Mrs Diane Barlow; David Snowden.

Four Million Dollar Lisa

talks to Nigel Smith, SRO for NW.

LISA Cornelius, Miss Australia 1983, is a beauty queen with a difference. As well as being selected for her obvious good looks, her charm and personality, Lisa had first to prove herself a good organiser and an excellent fund-raiser.

The Miss Australia Quest is not, as its director, Gail Brown, explained, "your typical, run of the mill beauty quest."

Every year, 2,000 girls are invited to enter the quest by their local officers and staff of the various state organisations for cerebral palsied people. The quest is the only competition on a national scale in the world, designed to raise funds for a charitable cause. Each one of the contestants raises funds for spastic people in their own area; many of the girls are themselves cerebral palsied. In 1982, 4.3 million dollars was raised.

Lisa Cornelius, together with her family, friends and new boyfriend — "I met him at my first ever function for CP," she admitted — sold thousands

of raffle tickets at her local branches of McDonalds, her sponsors for the contest. She also ran a chinese banquet, a fashion parade, a disco, a classical concert and a walkathon. "It really brings the family together," said Lisa. The results of her five month effort were over 4,000 dollars, and eventually the Miss Australia title.

Life has changed dramatically for Lisa. "I was a third year music student at the Adelaide University Conservatory, studying for a Bachelor of Music degree, and also had twenty pupils for piano and flute which are my instruments." After her year in office, Lisa will return to do her final term. The Miss Australia title means that Lisa is committed to over a thousand social engagements, and when you compare that to the number of days in a year, it's easy to see how busy she's kept.

Lisa was in Manchester and London at the end of March to welcome the first direct flight by Qantas. The Miss Australia Quest's national sponsor, from Australia to Manchester. But she and Gail just

couldn't resist taking the opportunity to visit Beaumont Products at Manchester, The Alf Stockdale Centre, and The Cheyne Centre, London. They also went to a lunch provided by Qantas for the announcement of the NW Region new Consumer Group.

Was meeting cerebral palsied people in Britain any different from in Australia? "Oh no," Lisa explained, "Cerebral palsied people are always so warm and friendly. They have more time for you than busy, busy, rush, rush able-bodied people. Of course," she added, "the accent may be a little different."

What about Britain itself? "I love it," Lisa enthused. "I'll be back."

On a sadder note perhaps, for all those who may have fallen for Lisa already, it won't be her that you'll see in the Miss World contest this year, but the winner of a separate contest, because, as both Gail and Lisa explained, that's not what the Quest is all about. "For us," says Gail, "a beautiful girl is one who cares about other people."

Keystone Press Agency



Lisa with children from the Cheyne Walk Centre, Chelsea.

Knotty problem solved

Continued from page 1

Ann Priest

and equipment. (Should the Council decide to change the use of Seeley's House, the money would be returned).

Fund-raising received a fillip on Saturday, May 7 when the Open Day at Seeley's House attracted some generous cheques. Between them, The Spastics Society, the South Bucks Spastics Society, the Beaconsfield Ladies' Circle and the Beaconsfield Round Table and Beaconsfield Lions contributed over £70,000 to the first phase, the day-care centre. And more money is promised.

Handicapped adults who now go to the George Mason Centre will have to leave because the lease has expired. They will move to Seeley's House on June 1.

"It will be marvellous when we can have day care and short-term stay under one roof," said a thankful mother.

More than one knotty problem is going to be solved.

Earl Howe receives a cheque for £40,000 from Mrs Joyce Smith, Chairman of The Spastics Society.



Brian Mills, a young adult who will use Seeley's House, holds the appeal brochure, "Co-operation in caring." Around him are, left to right, Jean Potterton, Head of Social Work, The Spastics Society; his parents, Margaret and Brian Mills; and Ann Hithersay, Director of Regions, The Spastics Society.

Ann Priest



THE Newton Elan

the only truly portable powered wheelchair

The Newton Elan is the only electric wheelchair to fold upright with batteries in position. And, of course, when you do want to remove them, the side-slung batteries are much easier to lift off. Independent suspension and two-speed gearbox give a smooth, comfortable ride, indoors or outdoors. And with fully proportional control the Elan is simple to operate and turns in tight corners. Added to that, the Newton Elan is the nicest-looking wheelchair to be seen around in!

from

meadway works

Find out more. Write for our free leaflet or ask for a home demonstration without obligation.

m meadway works
Garretts Green Lane, Birmingham B33 0SQ
Telephone: 021-783 6081



First Regional Consumer Group

INSPIRED by the formation of The Spastics Society's Consumer Group in 1982, the first Regional Consumer Group is being set up in the North West Region.

The convenor of the Consumer Group will be Ms Sharon Hughes of 6 Epworth Grove, Little Lever, Bolton. Sharon, who is 31, holds a BSc(Hons) degree in Psychology from Bolton Institute of Technology and is about to submit her M.Ed thesis to Manchester University on the subject of the integration of spastic children into normal schools.

She attended Birtenshaw Hall School for Spastic Children, Bromley Cross, Bolton and then went to The Spastics Society's

ciety, a member of the Forum of ADAPT (Action on Disabled Persons Transport), and Chairperson of the Bolton Transport for Disabled People Committee, whose aim is to set up a dial-a-ride bus service for disabled people in Bolton.

Sharon Hughes said that she felt the setting up of the Consumer Group was an important milestone in the Society's history. "It is a recognition of the fact that an increasing number of cerebral palsied people are, like myself, living independently in the community. It is a recognition that our opinions are valid and should be of major importance in the development of The Spastics Society's policy."

Nigel Smith



Sharon Hughes chats with David Hanson, Region Officer for the North West, at the Consumer Group lunch.

Thomas De La Rue School, Tonbridge, Kent. Currently unemployed, she hopes to start a teacher's training course in September. Sharon is a member of The Executive Committee of the Bolton and District Spastics So-

ciety. She added that the group would include people living in Spastics Society and other residential establishments, and she said that she hopes the group would help such people move towards more independent forms of living.

Parent protest

A CONFERENCE to discuss provision for mentally handicapped children in Barking and Dagenham rapidly turned into a protest meeting when it was learned that the Director of Social Services for Barking had refused to attend.

Angry parents drew up a petition demanding better facilities for their children and took it to the Town Hall.

Their determination paid off. The Director of Social Services agreed to attend the May meeting.

The one day conference on April 26 for parents and professional workers was organised by Anne Murphy of The Spastics Society. Jo Richardson, Labour MP for Barking, was there to give her support.

Representatives from MENCAP, Contact a Family, Kith and Kids and the Parents Handicapped Information Group spoke about the range of services available in the Metropolitan area. They were appalled to hear about the problems encountered by local parents.

"The parents of Barking

have got to get themselves organised for the sake of their children who seem to be at the bottom of the provision list," said Maurice Collins of Kith and Kids.

Kingsley Lewis, of Field End House, Islington, pointed out that this short-term respite home would not exist if parents had not lobbied the local authority.

Frances Sherritt, leader of the Barking and Dagenham parents' support group, summed up the mood of the conference when she said: "We are demanding urgent action on three priorities: full time day care, short term relief care and long term residential care in the community. We are prepared to fight for better provisions every inch of the way."

Stop Press May 9 Barking and Dagenham Social Services Department turned up in force to this meeting, accompanied by the Chairman of the Social Services Committee, Councillor Fred Tibble.

They confirmed that there are no residential units for children and no

Marathon New editor effort

MARATHON fever was rife all over the country in the months leading up to The London Marathon on April 17, 1983.

The Spastics Society is benefiting from the efforts of a large number of competitors, among them a team from Worthing and Littlehampton, organised by the local society's President, Lavinia, Duchess of Norfolk. The 10 runners, nine men and one woman, raised several hundreds of pounds each for the Lavinia Norfolk House Appeal, which has been set up to provide a residential home for 10 cerebral palsied adults, and which the Worthing and Littlehampton group hopes to open early next year.

The marathon team believe that they have raised about £20,000 by their efforts, towards the appeal total of £250,000.

'SAVE A BABY' POSTPONED

THE summer Save-a-Baby Week and conference scheduled for the last week of June, and announced in last month's issue, have been postponed. This is due to the General Election which was announced recently.

Minimum standards on obstetric care and neonatal intensive care are to be key issues of both the week and the conference. As The Society is seeking Government commitment on these questions, it was felt that it would be difficult to establish a constructive dialogue with a new government so early in its term of office. Save-a-Baby Week is now expected to be held in the late autumn.

The Society will still be producing a new range of literature this summer on pre-pregnancy care, pregnancy and early parenthood, for the public. Further details later.

There will also be an advertising campaign on posters and in teenage magazines on the importance of the Rubella vaccination programme in schools.

emergency care in the borough. Voluntary organisations like The Spastics Society are used for short-term care. There are 210 day and training centre places, but not all filled.

It was claimed that Barking and Dagenham spends more per capita on mentally handicapped people than any other London borough.

The parents' support group felt they had achieved something when they learnt that a social worker with special responsibility for mentally handicapped children is to be appointed at the end of the year. Social Services promised to look at the possibility of expanding fostering services to improve emergency care.

MARY Wilkinson is the new full-time editor of Spastics News.

She's married, with three children. As a freelance journalist she has been writing for national newspapers and magazines, and before that she was a feature writer for "Good Housekeeping" and editor of the magazine produced by the Good Housekeeping Institute.

She comes to the Spastics Society with some experience of campaigning and of the needs of old and handicapped people — she is a member of Lambeth's Adult Homes Committee and a school governor in Brixton.

Mary is enthusiastic about the "new" Spastics News to be launched in July. Not only will it look like a newspaper for 1983, but it will carry a wider range of articles geared to what readers in our recent survey said they wanted.

She wants to have more contributions from cerebral-palsied people in the newspaper; already members of the Consumers' Group have reviewed books for this issue. She also wants to get out to meet residents, staff and volunteers and to gather her news first-hand.

Meanwhile, she is at Park Crescent on the end of a phone if you have suggestions for an article or ideas for improving Spastics News.

Literary contest

CALLING all budding literary talents! Don't forget you have only just over two months to get your masterpiece ready for entry in the 13th Annual Spastics Society's Literary Contest before the closing date on August 1.

The contest is open to people with handicaps of any kind, and for those of all ages, from a very first original piece of work by the under 16s to the poetic culmination of a life-time's experience of writing.

Full competition details are available from the competition organiser, Mrs Nina Heycock, Chenil House, 181-183 King's Road, Chelsea, London SW3, together with entry forms for competitors.



ON April 16 two of the residents of Wakes Hall, the Stars Organisation for Spastics centre near Colchester, were married at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Halstead, Essex.

Our congratulations go to Miss Patricia Cathy (aged 51) and Mr Stanley Petri (aged 65). Both have been resident at Wakes Hall for some years.

The bride was given away by the Principal of Wakes Hall, Mr Stephen Richardson, and Stanley's brother, Ray, was best man. Miss Sue Gill, Workshop Instructor at the centre, was bridesmaid.

WORKERS UNITE!

BY making regular deductions from their pay packets, workers can help support a local centre which is providing essential services to children and adults with cerebral palsy.

Deductions can be large or small, from 10p a week to £10 a month. But the cumulative effect can make an enormous difference to the regular income of a work or residential centre that relies on donations grants. The money goes straight to where it is needed nothing is deducted on the way.

Adopt-a-Centre is the name of the scheme. It applies to any of the 140 centres run by The Spastics Society or its local groups in England and Wales.

Companies already involved in the scheme confirm that it is simple to operate. Land-Rover, Plessey, Thorn EMI and Tube Investments are

among the household names who have contributed a total of £6,500 in payroll deductions so far. Others, like Nestles, Ferranti and De La Rue, are showing interest after an appeal launched last February.

There has been a good response from 53 county trade councils representing local unions.

Now the Spastics Society has produced a leaflet/poster suitable for staff notice boards.

Alan Conroy or Paula Hewitt at Park Crescent would like to hear from readers who can help publicise the scheme. They want to reach personnel managers, trade union officials and, most of all, staff representatives. They are happy to send leaflets, but would much rather come and talk about the scheme and demonstrate how easy it is to operate.

Can you help by encouraging your colleagues to Adopt-a-Centre?

Rifton

EQUIPMENT FOR THE HANDICAPPED



A wide variety of special furniture and equipment for the handicapped child. Fully illustrated CATALOGUE available free. Robertsbridge E Sussex TN32 5DR phone 0580 880626

SPASTICS NEWS

Published by The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. Tel 01-636 5020.

Editor: Mary Wilkinson.

Circulation: Gwen Rose.

Advertising: Roy Collins, 37 Ruskin Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3BQ. Tel 01-647 1393.

Printed by F. J. Parsons, Observer Buildings, Cambridge Road, Hastings, Sussex.

The views expressed in Spastics News are not necessarily those of The Spastics Society.